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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5636
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 KHARTOUM 002894

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/SPG, AF/RSA, AND PRM
DEPT PLS PASS TO USAID/W
USAID FOR DCHA SUDAN TEAM AND AFR/SP
NAIROBI FOR USAID/DCHA/OFDA AND USAID/REDSO
GENEVA FOR N KYLOH
NAIROBI FOR SFO
NSC FOR MARCHAM, MAGAN, AND SHORTLEY
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU
USUN FOR MALY
BRUSSELS FOR LERNER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/21/2016

TAGS: [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KCRM](#) [ICRC](#) [UN](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: DARFUR: NGO PRESENCE UNDER THREAT - CORRECTED COPY

REF: A. KHARTOUM 02876

[1](#)B. KHARTOUM 02877

[1](#)C. KHARTOUM 02813 (NOTAL)

Classified By: P/E Chief E. Whitaker, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)

(Note: Corrected copy to reflect proper classification)

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request: see para 11.

[1](#)2. (C) Summary: Humanitarian conditions have declined markedly in the past few months, with several recent events, particularly in the Gereida area, representing a new threshold in what appears to be a concerted effort to chase NGOs out of Darfur. Incidents include a rape, car-jackings, theft of communications and computer equipment, interrogations, and forced relocations; this combination spells disaster for the hundreds of thousand of Darfurians who depend upon the humanitarian community for essential services and goods. End summary.

NGOs Operating Under Increasingly Harsh Conditions

[1](#)3. (C) A variety of occurrences over the past three months underscores the tenuous security environment faced by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in Darfur. The nature of the events and their severity are increasing; the potential for further deterioration during the holiday season put NGOs at increased risk. This is particularly true in the Gereida area of South Darfur, a town along the strategic Nyala) Buram road that has seen ongoing conflict for more than two years between tribal militias, rebel groups, Sudan Armed Forces, Popular Defense Forces (PDF), and Janjaweed.

[1](#)4. (C) Several recent events reflect this trend (Refs A and B):

-- The rape, apparently designed to send a brutal warning to international humanitarian workers, of an Action Contre la Faim (ACF) expatriate worker;

-- The rising pace of vehicles car-jackings) with 20 vehicles being stolen during the past month;

-- The selective theft of communications equipment and

computers (Ref A), which impedes the ability of NGOs to conduct their normal activities, report on conditions, and communicate with outsiders;

-- The interrogation of CARE International workers, including regarding their private e-mail messages (Ref B);

-- The withdrawal of NGOs from Darfur and relocation of 400 humanitarian assistance workers so far in the month of December alone (Ref C); and

-- The decreased overall ability of the international community to deliver essential services and commodities for internally displaced persons (IDPS) in Darfur.

MFA: NGOs are Politically Manipulated, Need Courage

15. (C) During a December 21 meeting with State Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmed Ali Karti, Charge Hume underscored the gravity of recent security events in Darfur, particularly in the Gereida area. The theft of a dozen vehicles, withdrawal of Oxfam and ACF, and sexual assault of a humanitarian worker jeopardized essential services and goods for 100,000 IDPs. Karti accused NGO workers of over-reacting, and not having the courage to remain in environments they knew to involve risk. Irritated, he stated they knew of Darfur's problems and were paid to do their work despite poor security. There is no perfume or roses in Darfur, he added, and NGO workers should refrain from reporting every wrong they encounter. The Sudanese Government cannot help them; they should return when there is stability. Finally, he accused NGO workers of "trying to play politics," and being manipulated to send a

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"political message."

UN: Humanitarian Assistance on the Brink

16. (C) During a December 21 meeting with Charge Hume, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General (DSRSG) for the United Nations (UN) in Sudan Manuel d,Silva and Deputy Director for Sudan of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) Michael McDonagh discussed the significant impact of recent insecurity in Gereida, South Darfur, and humanitarian operations across Darfur (covered in more detail in septel). UN officials hold Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) leader Minni Minawi responsible for the attack on NGO compounds (Ref B). The rape of an ACF employee during the raid crossed a new threshold in the targeting of humanitarian workers. The UN believes that the current situation in Gereida is untenable. In one to two months, the Gereida food supply will be exhausted.

17. (C) DSRSG holds the Sudanese Government responsible for the security situation in West Darfur, where on December 19 an USAID-partner humanitarian worker traveling in an ambulance was wounded during an attack on the police escorts around her vehicle. The UN is reflecting on its tripwires. If the situation has not changed in the next three months, the UN is considering pulling out with everyone. Should such a decision be taken, both DSRSG and UNOCHA agreed that cohesion among all international humanitarian agencies would be critical. In the DSRSG,s opinion, the Sudanese Government would not be able to survive any &next steps8 the international community might take and that the Sudanese should accept the offer on the table as the best deal they can get. Additionally, the Sudanese Government at the highest level should cease sending mixed messages and indicate to the international humanitarian community that it would like them to stay.

¶18. (C) At a December 21 meeting with Charge Hume, the ICRC Head of Delegation recounted the significant escalation in security incidents it has experienced since 2005. In 2005, two events occurred; 2006 saw 60. The nature of the incidents has changed from irritation and harassment to car-jackings at gunpoint and violent attacks at a residence. ICRC says it has much less humanitarian space to operate in now and has lost capacity to provide services. Despite this escalation, the ICRC will defer a decision until after the holidays regarding the possibility of posting only volunteers in Darfur.

¶19. (C) The ICRC is discussing with WFP the possibility of using UNHAS helicopters to transport its autonomous surgical team to needed locations. Currently, ICRC operates only from bases in government-held areas, requiring negotiations each time rebel lines are crossed. The ICRC is thus considering the establishment of operational bases in rebel-held areas. The recent attack of an ICRC residence in Kutum locality is linked to the displeasure of the government over the line-crossings the ICRC has been negotiating.

¶10. (C) In response to Charge Hume's description of the slow progress of the political process, the Head of Delegation mused that in the absence of a political process, the Sudanese Government would push the military option forward, resulting in more frequent and more serious incidents for the humanitarian actors delivering basic services to the displaced people in Darfur.

Targeting Darfur War Criminals

¶11. (S) Action requested: Department is requested to advise regarding Ref C's request to add a select list of Sudanese officials directly responsible for war crimes in Darfur for targeted financial sanctions. In light of the above

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incidents, the proposed listing of Ahmed Mohamed Haroun, State Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, is particularly important.

¶12. (U) Note: Given the gravity of these circumstances, post is issuing a warden message advisory to highlight worsening security conditions in Darfur and Southern Sudan. End note.
HUME